PRRC emerging trends

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How Do Americans Nourish And Strengthen Their Religious Faith?

PRINCETON, N.J. – How do Americans nourish and strengthen their religious faith? This question was asked in a major survey on Americans' beliefs about Jesus Christ, undertaken on behalf of Dr. Robert H. Schuller, Senior Pastor of the Crystal Cathedral of Garden Grove, California, by the Gallup Organization.

From a list of 17 items, survey respondents most frequently chose prayer and helping others.

Next most often cited are attending religious services, reading the Bible, followed by listening to sermons or lectures, meditation, taking walks and seeking to commune with nature.

Next most frequently named are receiving Holy Communion, watching religious TV programs, reading religious books other than the Bible, praying in a group, and seeking out fellow Christians.

These responses are followed by praying with others for spiritual healing, reading religious magazines, reading the Bible in a group, evangelizing, and spiritual counseling.

Only 9% indicated they did none of these or did not express an opinion.

Survey participants were handed a card with these 17 items listed and asked this question:

What sort of things, if any, do you do to nourish or strengthen your faith?

Here are the national results:

WHAT DO TO STRENGTHEN FAITH?

Pray alone	59%
Help others	51
Attend religious services	44
Read the Bible	39
Listen to sermons or lectures	36
Meditation	32
Take walks, commune with nature	31
Receive Holy Communion	29
Watch religious TV programs	21
Read religious books other than Bible	21
Pray in a group	19
Seek out fellow Christians	17
Pray with others for spiritual healing	14
Read religious magazines	13
Read Bible in a group	12
Evangelize, encourage others to accept Jesus	11
Spiritual counseling	8
None of the above	6
Don't know/no answer	3

CATHOLICS LESS LIKELY TO SELECT MOST ITEMS

Catholics are less apt than Protestants to choose most of the 17 items on the list. Catholics, however, are about as likely as Protestants to select attending religious services, communing with nature and meditation. They are more likely to choose receiving Holy Communion as a way to nourish and strengthen their faith.

Here is the comparison:

	Prot. %	Cath. %
Pray alone	67	58
Help others	57	49
Attend religious services	48	50
Read the Bible	52	24
Listen to sermons or lectures	42	33
Meditation	36	30
Take walks, commune with nature	32	30
Receive Holy Communion	30	39
Watch religious TV programs	29	14
Read religious books other than Bible	25	16
Pray in a group	24	16
Seek out fellow Christians	24	9
Pray with others for spiritual healing	18	9
Read religious magazines	16	10
Read Bible in a group	16	10
Evangelize, encourage others to accept Jesus Christ	15	6
Spritual counseling	11	6
None of the above	2	5
Don't know/no answer	3	1

The survey results are based on in-person interviews with 1,509 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities in December, 1982.

Many British View Church As 'Outmoded' And 'Out Of Touch'

Two out of every five adults in Great Britain feel that the Church urgently needs to change its image. The most common criticisms are that it is out of touch, has outdated and unnecessarily rigid attitudes and is "fairly irrelevant."

These findings are based on a recent Gallup survey conducted for the Bible Society. The survey also shows:

- Only 15% attend a weekly service while 56% never go at all or attend only for weddings, funerals and Christenings.
- 81% of the population have a Bible in the home, but about half claim never to have opened it.
- A third of the 20% of people who say they never attend church feel that God is important in their lives while 18% of non-churchgoers accept the Bible as "God's message to all mankind."
- One-fifth of the 1,136 people interviewed say the church needs more contact with the community, should increase its efforts to interest and attract young people and should be aiming its message more at non-attenders.
- Almost an equal number would prefer less dogmatism on matters like divorce, contraception and suicide, and criticize services as too boring, sermons as too serious and congregations as pompous and unfriendly.

The Rev. Tom Houston, Executive Director of the Bible Society, said the purpose of the survey was to provide evidence of the religious state of England before the visits of Luis Palun, an Argentinian-born evangelist, later this year, and Billy Graham in 1984.

Here are key findings:

KEY FINDINGS FROM BIBLE SOCIETY SURVEY

* *Is there a Bible in your home*?

Yes	81%
No	17
Unsure	2

* *Do you personally own a Bible*?

Yes	62%
No	37
Unsure	1

* *How often in the past year have you personally read anything from the Bible*? (Excluding church services)

Several times a week	8%
About once a week	4
About once a month	3
Several times in past year	13
About once in past year	10
Longer ago	26
Never read Bible	35

* *Attendance at a place of worship*:

At least once a week	15%
Once or twice a month	7
Several times a year	15
About once a year	8
Christenings, weddings and funerals only	36
Never or practically never	20

Note: Some columns do not add to 100% due to rounding.

CLERGY RATED HIGHEST ON HONESTY IN NEW SURVEY

Of 24 occupations studied, the public rates clergymen and pharmacists highest in terms of their perceived "honesty and ethical standards."

Clergymen, as in each of the earlier surveys, come out at the top of the scale, with 64% of respondents giving them a very high or high rating. Next are pharmacists or druggists, with a 61% positive rating.

Following closely are medical doctors, dentists, college teachers, engineers, and policemen, with positive scores ranging from 53% to 42%.

In the next tier are bankers, TV reporters or commentators, funeral directors, newspaper reporters and lawyers, with ratings from 38% to 24%.

Ten occupational groups are given very high or high ratings by 19% to 12%. These are stockbrokers, business executives, Senators, building contractors, local political officeholders, Congressmen, realtors, state political officeholders, insurance salesmen, and labor union leaders.

Advertising practitioners and car salesmen occupy the last two positions, receiving positive ratings from 8% and 6% of survey respondents, respectively.

6 In 10 Evangelicals Back Freeze

A national survey of evangelical Christians shows that six in 10 support a proposal for an immediate, verifiable freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union.

A total of 60% of evangelicals surveyed back such a freeze, while 18% express opposition. Endorsement in the overall poll of a mutual freeze is 75%, 15 percentage points higher than among evangelicals.

These findings are from a larger survey of 1,540 adults conducted by the Gallup Organization, Inc. for the National Association of Evangelicals. There are estimated to be more than 40 million evangelicals in the United States.

Seventeen percent of the total survey, or 358 respondents, were identified as evangelicals using the survey's criteria, which included belief in Biblical literalism, a conversion experience and a commitment to evangelism. The margin of error in a group the size of the evangelical sample is 7 percentage points.

VIEWS SIMILAR TO TOTAL SAMPLE

Evangelical attitudes are generally found to be similar to those of the entire sample. For example, 38% of evangelicals say they believe the Soviet Union holds nuclear superiority over the United States, while 36% of all respondents say the same.

Also, 41% of evangelicals say they approve of President Reagan's handling of the nuclear arms issue, against 43% in the overall survey. Evangelicals are somewhat less likely than all respondents to disapprove, by 26% and 34%, respectively.

Fifteen percent of evangelicals and 22% of the larger sample say the United States should undertake a freeze even if the Soviet Union refused while 67% of evangelicals and 68% of the general survey are opposed.

QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS

Following are the questions and the findings:

Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for an immediate, verifiable freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons?

BILATERAL NUCLEAR FREEZE

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Favor	75%	60%	78%
Oppose	16	18	16
No opinion	9	22	6
	100%	100%	100%

Would you favor or oppose a freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons at this time if the Soviet Union does not agree to a freeze?

UNILATERAL NUCLEAR FREEZE

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Favor	22%	15%	23%
Oppose	68	67	68
No opinion	10	18	9
	100%	100%	100%

Do you think the Soviet Union will or will not agree to on-site inspection of nuclear weapons in their nation?

WILL SOVIET UNION AGREE TO ON-SITE INSPECTION?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Will	10%	6%	11%
Will not	78	76	79
No opinion	12	18	10
	100%	100%	100%

In your opinion, which of the following increases the chances of a nuclear war more – a continuation of the nuclear arms buildup here and in the Soviet Union, or the U.S. falling behind the Soviet Union in nuclear weaponry?

WHICH INCREASES CHANCES OF NUCLEAR WAR MORE?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
U.S. falling behind	51%	54%	50%
Continuation of arms race	31	19	34
No opinion	18	27	16
	100%	100%	100%

At the present time, which nation do you feel is stronger in terms of nuclear weapons, the United States or the Soviet Union – or do you think they are about equal in nuclear strength?

WHICH NATION STRONGER?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Soviet Union	36%	38%	35%
United States	16	16	16
About equal	34	23	37
No opinion	14	23	12
	100%	100%	100%

How likely do you think we are to get into a nuclear war within the next ten years – very likely, fairly likely, fairly unlikely, or very unlikely?

HOW LIKELY TO GET INTO NUCLEAR WAR?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Very likely	13%	18%	12%
Fairly likely	21	23	21
Fairly unlikely	31	21	33
Very unlikely	26	22	27
No opinion	9	16	7
	100%	100%	100%

Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Reagan is dealing with the nuclear arms situation?

REAGAN HANDLING?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Approve	43%	41%	44%
Disapprove	34	26	35
No opinion	23	33	21
	100%	100%	100%

Do you think a person can be a good Christian and still support the possession of nuclear weapons for only defensive purposes, or not?

BE GOOD CHRISTIAN AND SUPPORT POSSESSION?

	Total	Evangelicals	Non-evangelicals
Yes, can be	77%	72%	78%
No, cannot	13	13	13
No opinion	10	15	9
	100%	100%	100%

INTERESTED IN CONDUCTING A SURVEY OF YOUR CHURCH?

A growing number of priests, ministers and rabbis have expressed interest in conducting surveys of their congregations and/or local communities.

If you share this interest and would like expert help and advice, we suggest you contact Russell D. Bredholt, Continental Research Associates, 1153 Winged Foot Circle, Winter Springs, Florida 32708. Telephone: (305) 365-4321. Continental Research Associates is affiliated with Princeton Religion Research Center.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN CANADA REMAINS FAIRLY STEADY AT 36%

Church attendance in Canada, on a typical May Sunday, has remained fairly steady over the past four years, and now stands at 36%.

The following table shows the trend, based on surveys conducted by The Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (The Gallup Poll of Canada).

Did you, yourself, happen to attend church or synagogue in the last seven days?

CHURCH/SYNAGOGUE ATTENDANCE

	Total %	Catholic %	Protestant %
1983	36	51	27
1982	35	48	27
1981	37	51	29
1980	35	50	26
1970	44	65	28
1965	55	83	32
1957	60	87	43

Attendance is highest in the Atlantic Provinces (53%) and lowest in British Columbia (21%). Women, those 50 years or older, and persons whose formal education ended at the grade school level are more likely to have attended within the past week:

	ATTENDANCE MAY, 1983
Atlantic	53%
Quebec	49
Ontario	28
Prairies	29
British Columbia	21
Men	33
Women	38
18-29 years	25
30-49 years	35
50 & older	47
University education	33
High School	34
Grade School	48

Personal, in-home interviews were completed with 1,050 adults, 18 years of age and over, during the first week of May. For a sample of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 4 percentage points in either direction.

Majority Of Catholics Favor Permitting Priests To Marry

By almost a 2-to-1 ratio, American Catholics favor permitting priests to marry and continue to function as priests.

In a recently-conducted Gallup survey, 58% of Catholic rank-and-file said they favor married priests, while 33% are opposed to such a move and 9% do not express an opinion.

In the survey, the strongest support for married priests is found among younger survey respondents (18 to 29 years old), college graduates, and single persons – groups from which priestly vocations have come in the past.

In addition, women, persons 30 to 49 years old, high school graduates, those from upper-income homes, persons living in households in which the chief wage earner is employed in business, the professions, or in blue-collar jobs, all support married priests by at least a 2-to-1 margin.

This question was asked of Roman Catholics:

Would you favor or oppose allowing Catholic priests to marry and continue to function as priests?

Following are the findings by key Catholic population groups:

MARRIED PRIESTS

	Favor %	Oppose %	No opinion %
Total	58	33	9
Men	54	35	11
Women	62	30	8
18-29 years	70	24	6
30-49 years	61	29	10
50 & older	46	44	10
College graduate	69	24	7
College incomplete	60	33	7
High school graduate	61	30	9
Less than high school graduate	48	40	12
Family income:			
$40,000 & over	67	26	7
$30,000-$39,999	65	30	5
$20,000-$29,999	61	31	8
$10,000-$19,999	54	35	11
Less than $10,000	50	37	13
East	61	32	7
Midwest	53	34	13
South	58	34	8
West	57	33	10

The findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,326 Roman Catholic adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation between April 15 and May 16.

For results based on a sample of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

The National Federation of Priests' Councils (NFPC), an all-celibate organization representing priest senates across the country, and the Corps of Reserve Priests United for Service (CORPUS), a national organization of mostly married priests willing to serve the Church, jointly sponsored the survey.

CANADIANS BELIEVE CHURCHES SHOULD KEEP OUT OF POLITICS

By a 5-to-4 ratio, Canadians lean to the view that churches should not express opinions on day-to-day political and social matters.

Catholics and Protestants hold almost identical views on the matter.

Here are the results, based on a survey conducted by The Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (The Gallup Poll of Canada):

CHURCHES KEEP OUT OF POLITICAL/SOCIAL MATTERS?

	Keep out %	Express views %	No opinion %
Total	50	41	9
Catholic	51	40	9
Protestant	51	42	8

Results to this question have remained stable over the past fifteen years. In 1968, 52% believed churches should keep out of non-religious matters while 40% felt they should express their views.

The latest results are based on personal, in-home interviews with 1,050 adults, 18 years of age and over, conducted during the first week of May. For a sample of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 4 percentage points in either direction.

Teens Think They Should Have Decision On Churchgoing At 16

A majority of teenagers believe that at age 16 they should be allowed to choose for themselves whether or not to go to church.

Younger teenagers suggest that this decision can be made wisely by age 15. Protestant youth and regular church attenders believe the decision should be made after the age of 16, but Catholic teenagers and those who do not attend church regularly say that church attendance can be determined at age 15.

Here is the question:

How old do you believe the average teenage girl (boy) should be before she (he) decides whether or not to go to church?

Here are the median ages given by key groups:

AGE TO DECIDE ON CHURCH	Median Age
All teenagers	16
16-18 years	16
13-15 years	15
Boys	16
Girls	16
Protestants	16
Catholics	15
Regular churchgoers	16
Non-regular churchgoers	15

By way of comparison, here are the views of teens for minimum ages in other areas of life:

TEENS' SUGGESTIONS FOR MINIMUM AGES
(Median estimates of all teenagers)

	Median Age
Girls can choose all their own clothes	13
Boys can choose all their own clothes	14
Girls can wear eye shadow	14
Can go out on dates (both sexes)	15
Girls can wear lipstick	15
Can stay out after 11 p.m. on weekends (both sexes)	16
Minimum age for being a licensed driver	16
Can have own car	17
Boys can grow beard or mustache	17
Minimum voting age	18
Can marry without parents' permission	18
Minimum drinking age	19

These Gallup Youth Survey findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative national cross-section of 506 teenagers, 13 through 18, conducted from January to March.

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How Can Churches Better Serve?

PRINCETON, N.J. – How can the churches of America better serve the people of this nation – both the churched and the unchurched?

The public's responses to a question posed in a recent survey shed some light on this vital subject. The question was part of a survey on Americans' beliefs about Jesus Christ conducted by The Gallup Organization for Dr. Robert Schuller, Senior Pastor of The Crystal Cathedral of Garden Grove, California.

The answers to this question provide a valuable guide to clergy of all faiths. Analysis of the results in terms of the level of importance placed on religion by survey respondents provides insight not only into ways of maintaining the involvement of the churched but also ways to reach out to those who are presently religiously unaffiliated or disinterested.

The question:

In which of these ways, if any, would you like to see churches better serve you? (Survey respondents were handed a card with 8 items.)

Eight persons in 10 (78%) cited one or more ways the churches could better serve them. Here are the national findings:

WAYS CHURCHES CAN SERVE BETTER

Help you put your faith into practice	37%
Enable you to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ	35
Shed light on issues such as the problems of suffering, death, and dying	33
Help people to be more effective parents	32
Enable you to serve others better	31
Develop greater use of your gifts or talents	21
Help you in your prayer life	19
Through counseling with prayer	16
Other responses	1
None	8
Don't know	14
	247%*

**Total adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses.*

A total of 85% of persons who say religion is "very important" in their lives cite one or more ways churches can be helpful to them. Most frequently cited by this group are: "enable you to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ" (46%) and "help you put your faith into practice" (45%).

A total of 78% of those who say religion is "fairly important" offer one or more ways churches can be of greater service to them. This group most often names "shed light on issues such as the problems of suffering, death and dying" (37%).

Almost half (48%) of survey respondents who say religion is "not very important" name things churches can do to help them. Most often cited are "help people to be more effective parents."

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION

	Very important %	Fairly important %	Not very important %
Help you put your faith into practice	45	31	15
Enable you to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ	46	25	10
Shed light on issues such as the problems of suffering, death and dying	35	37	19
Help people to be more effective parents	35	31	22
Enable you to serve others better	35	31	14
Develop greater use of your gifts or talents	22	20	14
Help you in your prayer life	25	13	6
Through counseling with prayer	22	10	6
Other responses	2	1	2
None	5	6	25
Don't know	10	16	27
	282%*	221%*	160%*

**Totals add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.*

Drug Abuse: Top Teen Problem

Teenagers, according to the latest Gallup Youth Survey, say drug abuse is the biggest problem facing their generation. Concern about the impact of drugs has risen from 27% in 1977, when teenagers also named it as the biggest problem facing their generation, to 35% in 1983.

Since 1977, however, the nature of the problem may have changed. Gallup Youth Surveys have shown a steady decline over the years in teenage acceptance of proposals to legalize marijuana or to decriminalize its possession in small amounts. In 1977 teenagers saw drugs as a part of the generation gap and a symbol of their generation's uncertainty in coping with the world around them.

Younger teenagers, 13 to 15 years old, are particularly concerned about drug abuse, with 42% naming it as the biggest problem, in comparison to 28% of the older teenagers. Young women show somewhat greater concern than young men about drug abuse by a margin of 38% to 31%.

UNEMPLOYMENT SEEN AS NO. 2 PROBLEM

In the current survey teenagers also name other kinds of problems as being important to their generation. Unemployment, named by 16% of the teenagers, ranks as the No. 2 problem facing the current generation. In 1977, only 6% said that poor job prospects were a problem. Those who will soon be entering the job market are particularly concerned about unemployment, with 22% of the teenagers, 16 to 18, naming it as the leading problem.

Alcohol abuse is the third leading area of concern and is named by one teenager in 10 (10%). Alcohol abuse also ranked third in 1977 when it was named by 7%. Peer pressures (8%) rank fourth – and often consist of pressures felt by teenagers from their friends to break the rules and to experiment with drugs or alcohol.

GOOD NEWS SEEN IN FINDINGS

The good news about today's generation may be that teenagers no longer feel the pressure of alienation from their parents. Only 5% now cite lack of communication or getting along with their parents as their biggest problem. By contrast, in 1977 one teenager in five (20%) said a breakdown in parental communications and relations was the major problem facing their generation.

Today's teenagers still face many problems, but at least now they may not have to deal with parental alienation at the same time. By the same token, citation of problems in growing up or finding one's purpose in life has declined from 6% in 1977 to only 1% in 1983.

FEW CITE PROBLEMS RELATED TO SCHOOLS

Problems in school are cited by only one teenager in 20 (5%) and an additional 1% express concern about school drop-outs.

Fear of war is named by 4%. This fear was cited by less than 1% in 1977.

Economic problems such as inflation are named by only 2%, and 1% cite the specific economic problem of financing their college education.

In 1977 smoking and job boredom were each cited by 3% of the teenagers, but in 1983 each is mentioned by fewer than 1% of the nation's teenagers as their generation's leading problem.

DETAILS OF SURVEY

The question was asked as follows:

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing people your age?

The results reported are based on telephone interviews with a representative national cross-section of 508 teenagers conducted from April to June.

BIGGEST PROBLEM FACING TEENAGERS

	1983 %	1977 %
Drug abuse	35	27
Unemployment	16	6
Alcohol abuse	10	7
Peer pressures	8	5
Getting along with parents	5	20
School problems	5	3
Fear of war	4	*
Career doubts and uncertainty	3	3
Economic problems	2	3
Financing college	1	*
Problems in growing up/ Finding purpose in life	1	6
School drop-outs	1	*
Miscellaneous	4	12
Don't know	18	14
	113%**	106%**

* *Less than 1%.*

** *Totals add to more than 100% due to multiple responses.*

Confidence In Church Is Highest

The public's confidence in the nation's most important institutions is no higher today than it was a decade ago, in the days of Watergate. In the case of some of the institutions tested, confidence has actually fallen since 1973.

Institutions now accorded about the same degree of public confidence as 10 years ago include: The church or organized religion, the U.S. Supreme Court, newspapers, big business, and organized labor.

On the other hand, the public schools, Congress, and television now receive markedly lower confidence ratings than in the earlier survey.

RELIGION RATED HIGHEST

Today, as in each of the previous surveys, the Church or organized religion is the highest rated institution tested, with 62% of survey participants saying they have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in it. In 1973, 66% expressed a similar amount of confidence in the Church.

Next in the current survey is the military, with 53% saying they have a high degree of confidence, followed by banks and banking (51%).

In the next tier are the U.S. Supreme Court (42%), the public schools (39%), and newspapers (38%). Congress and big business each receives positive confidence ratings from 28% of the public.

The last two institutions on this year's list are organized labor (26%) and television (25%). In the 1973 survey organized labor was favorably rated by 30% of the public, and television by 37%.

Here is the question asked and highlights of the trend:

I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Would you please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one – a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?

CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS

(Percent saying "great deal" or "quite a lot")

	1983 %	1981 %	1979 %	1977 %	1975 %	1973 %
Church or organized religion	62	64	65	64	68	66
Military	53	50	54	57	58	NA
Banks and banking	51	46	60	NA	NA	NA
U.S. Supreme Court	42	46	45	46	49	44
Public schools	39	42	53	54	NA	58
Newspapers	38	35	51	NA	NA	39
Congress	28	29	34	40	40	42
Big business	28	20	32	33	34	26
Organized labor	26	28	36	39	38	30
Television	25	25	38	NA	NA	37

SCHOOLS' RATING REFLECTS COMMISSION'S FINDINGS

The sharp decline in confidence in the public schools, from 58% in the 1973 survey to 39% at present, comes at a time of widespread public dissatisfaction with public education. This loss of confidence was recently reflected in the findings of the bipartisan National Commission on Excellence in Education. The commission's report concluded, "The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people."

YOUNG ADULTS' VIEWS OFFER LITTLE CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM

The current views of young adults (18-29 years old) offer little cause for optimism for the immediate future. The proportion of young people expressing a high degree of confidence is no higher than that of persons 30 and over in the case of five of the institutions tested, and in some cases is lower.

The following table shows the percentages of adults in each of three age groups expressing a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the institutions tested, ranked from the highest to lowest on the basis of the total sample:

CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS

(Percent saying "great deal" or "quite a lot")

	18-29 years %	30-49 years %	50 & older %
Church or organized religion	55	61	69
Military	49	49	58
Banks and banking	46	44	59
U.S. Supreme Court	47	42	38
Public schools	34	40	40
Newspapers	45	34	36
Congress	29	25	30
Big business	31	24	29
Organized labor	36	22	22
Television	23	25	24

The results are based on in-person interviews with 1,497 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period August 5-8.

For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

Study Shows Growing Tolerance

One of the more dramatic developments in the political scene over the past quarter century has been the growing willingness of the electorate to say they would vote for a Catholic, a Jew, a woman, or a black for president.

In 1958, 68% of the public said they would vote for a well-qualified man if he happened to be a Catholic; today the proportion is 92%.

In 1958, 62% indicated they would vote for a qualified Jewish presidential candidate; the current figure is 88%.

In 1958, 52% said they would have no trouble voting for a woman for president; in the latest survey 80% express the same view.

In terms of their willingness to support a black man for president, the proportion vaulted from 38% in 1958 to 77% in 1978, a level maintained in the current survey.

ATHEISTS, HOMOSEXUALS SEEN NOT ACCEPTABLE

While the barriers of race, religion and sex have fallen dramatically during the last generation, the survey offers evidence that not all political discrimination has disappeared. Only 42% of respondents, for instance, say they would be willing to vote for an atheist for president while even fewer, 29%, would support a homosexual. Although it still lacks majority backing, the concept of an atheist for president has grown far more acceptable now than it was in 1958, when merely 18% of respondents indicated they would be willing to vote for an atheist.

The question of a homosexual for president was not asked in 1958; five years ago 26% said they would vote for a homosexual, statistically indistinguishable from the 29% who now express this opinion.

These questions were asked:

Between now and the political conventions of 1984 there will be discussion about the qualifications of presidential candidates – their education, age, religion, race and so on.

If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

If your party nominated a generally well-qualifed man for president and he happened to be a black (Catholic, Jew, atheist, homosexual), would you vote for him?

The following table shows the latest findings and the trends since 1958 in the proportions of Americans who say they would vote for a member of each of the groups studied:

PREJUDICE IN POLITICS

(Percent who would vote for each)

	1983 %	1978 %	1958 %
Catholic	92	91	68
Jew	88	82	62
Woman	80	76	52
Black	77	77	38
Atheist	42	40	18
Homosexual	29	26	NA

OPPOSITION FROM OLDER, LESS-EDUCATED SEGMENT

In the case of the groups studied, greater opposition in the current survey is found on the part of older Americans and those with little formal education, as seen below:

By Age

	18-29 years %	30-49 years %	50-64 years %	65 & older %
Catholic	94	95	89	88
Jew	91	88	87	82
Woman	89	83	72	68
Black	86	80	74	64
Atheist	57	46	30	23
Homosexual	40	31	22	13

By Education

	College education %	High school %	Grade school %
Catholic	96	93	81
Jew	95	89	71
Woman	87	80	69
Black	85	78	59
Atheist	54	43	16
Homosexual	42	27	12

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,517 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period April 29-May 2.

For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

8 In 10 Favor Prayer Amendment

An overwhelming majority of Americans favor a Constitutional Amendment that would permit voluntary group prayer in public schools.

Among the eight in 10 (82%) who have followed the pros and cons of the debate over prayer in public schools, 81% say they favor the proposed Amendment while 14% oppose it and 5% are undecided.

Public support for such an Amendment has remained firm over the 15 months since President Reagan first proposed it. A May 1982 survey showed 78% of the aware group (also 82% in that survey) in favor of the Reagan proposal, 16% opposed and 6% with no opinion.

Nearly half of the aware group (48%) say they strongly favor the proposed Amendment, while 33% express mild support. On the disapproval side, 7% say they strongly oppose the Amendment, while 7% express mild opposition.

The President's proposed Amendment states:

"Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any state to participate in prayer."

Organized group prayer in public schools effectively came to an end in 1962 after the Supreme Court ruled it violated the First Amendment.

All persons in the survey were first asked this question:

Have you heard or read about a proposed Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow voluntary prayer in the public schools?

Eight in 10 (82%) replied in the affirmative. This "aware" group was asked:

Do you favor or oppose this proposed Amendment? *How strongly do you favor (oppose) this proposed Amendment – very strongly, fairly strongly, or not at all strongly*?

Here are the national findings:

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL PRAYER
(Based on aware group)

Favor – Total		81%
Very strongly	48%	
Fairly strongly	29	
Not at all strongly	4	
Oppose – Total		14
Not at all strongly	2	
Fairly strongly	5	
Very strongly	7	
No opinion		5
		100%

Here are the results by key population groups:

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL PRAYER
(Based on aware group)

	Favor %	Oppose %	No opinion %
Total	81	14	5
Men	79	16	5
Women	83	12	5
Whites	79	15	6
Non-whites	91	7	2
18-29 years	77	18	5
30-49 years	79	15	6
50 & older	85	10	5
College education	72	21	7
High school	84	11	5
Grade school	94	5	1
Catholics	84	10	6
Protestants	84	11	5
Baptists	91	6	3
Methodists	82	11	7
Republicans	85	10	5
Democrats	81	14	5
Independents	77	16	7
East	81	16	3
Midwest	85	10	5
South	86	9	5
West	67	25	8

HOME SEEN AS KEY TRAINING GROUND

Although the public overwhelmingly favors permitting voluntary prayer in schools, the prevailing opinion among all groups and faiths is that the home is more important than either the church or schools in the religious training of children.

Currently 80% say the home is most important in the religious and spiritual development of a child while 15% name the church and only 2% name the schools.

The results are based on in-person interviews with 1,567 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected locations across the nation during the period July 22-25.

For results based on a sample of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

'Religion In America, 1984' Report To Offer Steps For Church Growth

With recent surveys revealing a surge of interest among Americans in religious and spiritual matters, as well as growing involvement in a variety of religious activities, the challenge for churches in the immediate years ahead is to channel this new interest into solid religious commitment.

But before churches can develop the appropriate strategies, they need to be aware of the current levels of religious belief, practice and knowledge among Americans. The new report, RELIGION IN AMERICA, 1984, is designed to provide solid, actionable information of this kind.

Here are some of the key sections in the 1984 report to be published this winter by the Gallup Organization:

- PRACTICAL WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCHES. The steadily increasing availability of survey data on religion point to practical ways to strengthen religious commitment and reach the unchurched.
- ANALYSIS OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. Because no other organization regularly measures America's churchgoing habits, the Gallup Poll has lent its fact-finding services for this purpose. The data in this section include trends in churchgoing and church membership by major faiths and denominations.
- PROFILES OF MAJOR FAITHS AND DENOMINATIONS. The religious preferences of more than 40,000 Americans surveyed during 1983 are examined in terms of age, sex, race, level of education, region and many other background characteristics.
- THE RELIGIOUS WORLD OF AMERICAN TEENAGERS. An in-depth examination of the religious beliefs, practices and knowledge of this important segment of the population, who will have much to do with the shape of religion in the immediate years ahead.
- UPDATES OF OTHER LONG-TERM GALLUP TRENDS IN RELIGION. Many of these indicators have become basic and standard measurements of the state of organized religion in the U.S. They include not only church attendance, membership, and religious preference, but also basic religious beliefs, the importance placed on religion, and confidence in organized religion.

HOW TO ORDER
RELIGION IN AMERICA, 1984

Religion In America, 1984 can be ordered from the Gallup Organization, P.O. Box 310, Princeton, New Jersey 08542 for $25.00.

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